

Native shrubs include wild plums and chokecherries, found throughout Nebraska. A variety of flowers, such as goldenrod, larkspur, columbine, wild roses and sunflowers, thrive throughout the state.

Before white settlers arrived in Nebraska, buffalo and beaver populations were significant. Today, buffalo are never seen outside game preserves. The beaver population, after being diminished by trappers, has become more plentiful in recent years. Other animals in Nebraska include white-tail and mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, antelope, bobcats, foxes, coyotes, badgers, squirrels, prairie dogs, muskrats, skunks, raccoons, rabbits and opossums.

Game birds, especially pheasants, grouse, ducks, geese and quail, are plentiful in Nebraska. The state's waters yield a variety of fish, including bass, carp, catfish, crappie, perch, pike, trout and walleye. The Platte River and lakes in the Sandhills serve as "rest stops" for many migratory birds, including the famous Sandhill cranes (see previous page).

Another migration rest stop of international significance is the Rainwater Basin district in south-central Nebraska. Within this district, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages more than 23,000 acres of wetlands and adjacent tall-grass prairie to provide habitat for migratory birds and resident wildlife.²²

ECONOMY²³

Agriculture

Nebraska's economy revolves around its agriculture industry. In 2011, 93 percent of the state's land — 45.6 million acres — was farm and ranch land.

Producers have taken advantage of the state's fertile soil, abundant water, intensive cultivation and advanced farming methods to produce record-high crop yields in recent years. In 2010, gross cash receipts from farm marketing totaled over \$17 billion, and Nebraska had 46,800 farms.

Crop Production²⁴

Nebraska is a national leader in crop production. In 2011, Nebraska led the nation in production of Great Northern beans, grown in the western one-third of the state, and in popcorn production. The state ranked second in pinto bean and proso millet production; third in corn for grain production; fourth in all dry edible bean, soybean and all hay production; fifth in grain sorghum production; seventh in winter wheat production; and eighth in alfalfa hay production. Sugar beets and potatoes also play a significant role in the state's agricultural economy.

²² For more information about the Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District and national wildlife refuges in Nebraska, see Page 150.

²³ Information for this section compiled from the following sources: Nebraska Department of Agriculture; Nebraska Department of Economic Development; Nebraska Department of Labor; Bureau of Economic Analysis and Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce; Bureau of Business Research, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; *Fortune* magazine.

²⁴ See Page 470 for a complete set of Nebraska's rankings in agriculture production.

Nebraska's top cash crop is corn. Each year, more than 8 million acres of the state's land is planted in corn. The state's livestock, poultry and ethanol industries are the largest corn consumers.

Products relating to agriculture, such as irrigation systems and farm equipment, are manufactured in the state. Agricultural businesses are an important part of Nebraska's economy, with one in three jobs in the state relating to the agricultural industry.

Livestock Production

Nebraska also is a leader in livestock production. In 2010, livestock production and livestock products were an \$8.5 billion industry. In 2011, Nebraska ranked first nationally in commercial red meat production and commercial cattle slaughter; second in all cattle on feed and all cattle and calves; fourth in cash receipts from all livestock and livestock products; sixth in all hogs and pigs on farms; and seventh in commercial hog slaughter.

Turkey, poultry, dairy, sheep and goat production add diversity and play an important role in the state's economy.



Cattle Ranching in Nebraska

Other Industries

Although agriculture dominates Nebraska’s economy, more of Nebraska’s income has come from other industries in recent years.

Manufacturing, which employed almost 400,000 workers in 2005, is a major employer among nonfarm industries, with most manufacturing sites located in the state’s large urban areas. Douglas, Lancaster, Hall and Platte counties employ almost 49,000 workers in manufacturing. Food processing is the leading type of manufacturing, followed by the manufacturing of machinery and fabricated metal products.

The service sector, which includes health services and business services, generates the most earnings in Nebraska. Government ranks second in earnings generated, while manufacturing is third.

The service sector also employs more workers than any other industry. Government jobs, many of which are in Lincoln, employ the second-highest number of workers. Wholesale and retail trades, taken together, employ the third-highest number of workers, with general merchandise stores being the largest employer among retail establishments in the state.

Lincoln is a major employer in education, led by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and other institutions of higher education. Omaha is a major center for food processing, healthcare, insurance, trade, transportation and telecommunications. Livestock and grain exchanges also are in Nebraska’s largest city.

Five Nebraska-based businesses are in the Fortune 500, *Fortune* magazine’s annual list of the largest industrial and service corporations in the United States based on revenue. These five are:

- Berkshire Hathaway, a diversified holding and investment firm
- Union Pacific, a railway network operating in the western two-thirds of the United States
- ConAgra, a food processing and marketing company
- Peter Kiewit Sons’, an engineering and construction firm
- Mutual of Omaha, an insurance and financial services company

These corporations have their headquarters in Omaha.

Fortune 500 Companies Based in Nebraska, 2012²⁵

| Company | Headquarters | Fortune 500 Rank | Revenues |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Berkshire Hathaway | Omaha | 7 | \$143,688,000,000 |
| Union Pacific..... | Omaha | 143..... | 19,557,000,000 |
| ConAgra | Omaha | 215..... | 12,395,500,000 |
| Peter Kiewit Sons' | Omaha | 255..... | 10,381,100,000 |
| Mutual of Omaha | Omaha | 411..... | 5,974,100,000 |

²⁵ Source: *Fortune* magazine, May 21, 2012.

Largest Public Employers in Nebraska, 2005²⁶

| Employer | Location | Employees |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| State of Nebraska Government (excluding university)..... | Statewide | 18,653 |
| U.S. Government (excluding Department of Defense)..... | Statewide | 15,403 |
| U.S. Air Force/Offutt..... | Omaha..... | 11,137* |
| Omaha Public Schools..... | Omaha..... | 8,073** |
| Lincoln Public Schools..... | Lincoln..... | 5,900* |
| University of Nebraska-Lincoln | Lincoln | 4,915 |
| University of Nebraska Medical Center..... | Omaha..... | 3,411 |
| City of Omaha..... | Omaha..... | 2,800* |
| City of Lincoln..... | Lincoln..... | 2,746* |
| Millard Public Schools..... | Millard..... | 2,498* |
| Douglas County..... | Omaha..... | 2,404* |
| Omaha Public Power District..... | Omaha..... | 2,354 |
| Nebraska Public Power District..... | Columbus..... | 2,153 |
| Central Community College..... | Grand Island..... | 1,672* |
| University of Nebraska at Omaha..... | Omaha..... | 1,328 |
| Lancaster County..... | Lincoln..... | 1,255* |
| US Veterans Hospital..... | Omaha..... | 1,199 |
| Air and Army National Guard..... | Lincoln..... | 923* |
| University of Nebraska at Kearney..... | Kearney..... | 893 |

²⁶Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Omaha World-Herald. Those public employee numbers designated with an asterisk (*) are reported employment numbers in 2003 because 2005 numbers were not available. A double asterisk (**) are reported employment numbers in 2002 because more recent numbers were not available.



Union Pacific Railroad Cars in North Platte's Bailey Yard

Largest Private Employers in Nebraska, 2005²⁷

| Employer | Location | Employees |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|
| Tyson Foods, Inc. | Dakota City..... | 11,000 |
| Wal-Mart..... | Bellevue..... | 9,755 |
| Union Pacific Corp. | Omaha..... | 7,200 |
| Alegent Health..... | Omaha..... | 6,675 |
| First Data Corp. | Omaha..... | 6,300 |
| Mutual of Omaha Insurance Co..... | Omaha..... | 5,400 |
| Hy-Vee Food Stores..... | Omaha..... | 4,843 |
| First National of Nebraska Inc..... | Omaha..... | 4,651 |
| Nebraska Methodist Health System..... | Omaha..... | 4,446 |
| Burlington Northern..... | Omaha..... | 4,400 |
| BryanLGH Medical Center..... | Lincoln..... | 4,200 |
| ConAgra Inc. | Omaha..... | 4,000 |
| Cabela's Inc. | Sidney..... | 3,887 |
| Cargill Inc. | Blair..... | 3,504 |
| Swift & Co. | Omaha, Grand Island..... | 3,168 |
| Crete Carrier Corp. | Lincoln..... | 3,040 |
| Oriental Trading Company..... | Omaha..... | 3,000 |
| West Corp. | Omaha..... | 2,800 |
| Baker's Supermarkets (Kroger Co.)..... | Omaha..... | 2,535 |
| Creighton University..... | Omaha..... | 2,500 |
| Pamida/Shopko..... | Omaha..... | 2,463 |
| St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center..... | Lincoln..... | 2,393 |
| Nebraska Furniture Mart..... | Omaha..... | 2,166 |
| Becton Dickinson..... | Columbus..... | 2,100 |
| B & R Stores Inc. | Lincoln..... | 2,011 |
| Smithfield Foods Inc. (formerly Farmland Foods)..... | Crete..... | 1,857 |
| Qwest Communications..... | Omaha..... | 1,850 |
| Target Stores..... | Statewide..... | 1,781 |
| Good Samaritan Hospital..... | Kearney..... | 1,700 |
| Father Flanagan's Boys & Girls Town. | Omaha..... | 1,700 |
| UPS..... | Omaha..... | 1,687 |
| Werner Enterprises Inc. | Omaha..... | 1,622 |
| Omaha Steaks Inc. | Omaha..... | 1,600 |
| Chief Industries Inc. | Grand Island..... | 1,600 |
| Valmont Industries Inc. | Omaha..... | 1,500 |
| Ameritrade Holding Corp. | Omaha..... | 1,500 |
| Children's Hospital..... | Omaha..... | 1,428 |
| Buckle Inc. | Kearney..... | 1,404 |
| St. Joseph Hospital (Creighton Medical Center)..... | Omaha..... | 1,350 |
| Hormel Foods Corp. | Fremont..... | 1,341 |
| Wells Fargo Bank..... | Omaha..... | 1,320 |
| Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co..... | Lincoln..... | 1,300 |
| Omaha World-Herald..... | Omaha..... | 1,300 |
| Commercial Federal Corp. | Omaha..... | 1,266 |
| Marriott Regional Center..... | Omaha..... | 1,220 |
| Bag N Save..... | Omaha..... | 1,200 |
| Info USA Inc. | Omaha..... | 1,200 |
| Runza National..... | Lincoln..... | 1,200 |
| CSG Inc. | Omaha..... | 1,200 |
| Regional West Medical Center..... | Scottsbluff..... | 1,155 |
| St. Francis Medical Center..... | Grand Island..... | 1,140 |
| Cox Communications..... | Omaha..... | 1,100 |
| Lozier Corp. | Omaha..... | 1,100 |
| Ameritas Acacia Mutual Holding Co. | Lincoln..... | 1,100 |
| Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital..... | Lincoln..... | 1,100 |
| JC Penney Co. | Omaha..... | 1,100 |
| Gallup Organization..... | Lincoln..... | 1,100 |
| Vishay Dale Electronics Inc. | Columbus..... | 1,100 |
| Kawasaki Motors Manufacturing Corp. USA..... | Lincoln..... | 1,060 |
| Physicians Mutual Insurance Co..... | Omaha..... | 1,029 |
| Faith Regional Health Services..... | Norfolk..... | 1,020 |
| Nebco Inc., Constructors Inc. | Lincoln..... | 1,000 |
| Duncan Aviation..... | Lincoln..... | 1,000 |

²⁷ Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

Income and Earnings in Nebraska²⁸

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--|----------|--------|--------|
| INCOME²⁹ | | | |
| Total Personal Income..... | \$70,085 | 72,353 | 76,624 |
| Nonfarm earnings..... | 50,768 | 52,088 | 53,849 |
| Farm earnings..... | 3,280 | 3,440 | 4,573 |
| EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY³⁰ | | | |
| Forestry, Fishing, and other..... | 219 | 214 | 240 |
| Mining..... | 74 | 80 | 106 |
| Utilities..... | 484 | 445 | 438 |
| Construction..... | 3,374 | 3,213 | 3,059 |
| Manufacturing..... | 5,216 | 5,365 | 5,585 |
| Durable..... | 2,450 | 2,559 | 2,737 |
| Nondurable..... | 2,766 | 2,806 | 2,848 |
| Wholesale Trade..... | 2,645 | 2,688 | 2,816 |
| Retail Trade..... | 3,269 | 3,409 | 3,493 |
| Transportation and Warehousing..... | 3,725 | 3,882 | 4,008 |
| Information..... | 1,209 | 1,202 | 1,303 |
| Finance and Insurance..... | 3,844 | 4,000 | 4,153 |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services..... | 3,492 | 3,615 | 3,800 |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises..... | 1,641 | 1,625 | 1,700 |
| Administrative and Waste Management Services..... | 1,574 | 1,595 | 1,716 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance..... | 5,861 | 6,026 | 6,370 |
| Arts, Entertainment and Recreation..... | 288 | 297 | 306 |
| Accommodation and Food Services..... | 1,169 | 1,247 | 1,307 |
| Government and Government Enterprises..... | 9,662 | 10,000 | 10,131 |
| Federal, Civilian..... | 1,453 | 1,569 | 1,590 |
| Military..... | 1,028 | 1,046 | 1,060 |
| State and Local..... | 7,181 | 7,385 | 7,481 |

²⁸ Figures are in millions of dollars. Source: Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, March 2012.

²⁹ Farm earnings consist of proprietors' net farm income, wages of hired farm labor, pay-in-kind and officers' salaries of corporate farms.

³⁰ Earnings are the sum of wages and salaries, other labor income and sole proprietors' income.

Employment by Nonfarm Industries in Nebraska, 2011³¹

| Industry | Average Number of Employees |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Trade, Transportation, Warehouse and Utilities..... | 195,781 |
| Education and Health Services..... | 137,082 |
| Professional and Business Services..... | 103,495 |
| Manufacturing..... | 93,096 |
| Leisure and Hospitality..... | 82,274 |
| Finance..... | 69,492 |
| Natural Resources, Mining and Construction..... | 41,038 |
| Other Services..... | 36,623 |
| Information..... | 16,910 |
| TOTAL PRIVATE OWNERSHIP..... | 775,790 |
| Local Government..... | 110,847 |
| State Government..... | 40,719 |
| Federal Government..... | 16,632 |
| TOTAL GOVERNMENT..... | 168,198 |
| TOTAL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INDUSTRY..... | 943,988 |

³¹ Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Current Employment Statistics, 2012.